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**Lower Willamette Group**

**Co-Chairperson: Trey Harbert, Port of Portland**

**Co-Chairperson: Bob Wyatt, NW Natural**

**Treasurer: Larry Patterson, ATOFINA**

**Environmental Cleanup Office**

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Wallace A Reid  
Project Manager  
US EPA  
1200 Sixth Avenue, ECL-115  
Seattle, WA 98101

Chip Humphrey  
Project Manager  
US EPA  
811 SW Sixth Avenue, 3rd Floor  
Portland, OR 97204

Tara Karamas  
US EPA  
Region 10  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle, WA 98101

RE Status of 2002 Fish Collection Task



Dear Wally, Chip and Tara

This letter provides EPA with an overview of the status of the Lower Willamette Group's fish collection effort for 2002 and contains recommendations for changes to the program presented in the Field Sampling Plan

The LWG initiated field work for fish tissues in June 2002 for juvenile chinook and on July 22, 2002 for the remaining ten species. Our field crews have been working continuously since then to collect these remaining species. We presently have less than 1 month remaining in the available field season as water levels typically rise starting in late October or early November. We believe that it is imperative that we complete sampling prior to water levels rising to maintain a consistent exposure regime for the fish, and not collect fish after the river has become muddy and sediments may be in transport.

Sampling has been completed for juvenile chinook, carp, brown bullhead and largescale sucker. We have carefully reviewed the status of the remaining fish collections and recommend the following changes to our field plan:

**Crayfish – total of 21 stations**

Drop Station 07R001 Poor habitat (sand)

Drop Station 07R004 Poor habitat (sand)

Add Station 03R032 (RM 3 8 at Owens Corning) New station location has suitable habitat

Use Station 03R003 for duplicate analysis

Use Station 03R008 for duplicate analysis

Use Station 09R001 for duplicate analysis

**Sculpin – total of 22 stations**

Drop Station 03R003 Poor habitat (sand)

Drop Station 05R002 Poor habitat (sandy mud)

Drop Station 07R001 Poor habitat (sand)

Drop Station 07R002 Poor habitat (sand). EPA has already approved this change

Add Station 03R032 (RM 3 8 at Owens Corning)

Add Station 05R020 as an alternative to 05R002

Use Station 03R002 for duplicate analysis

Use Station 03R004 for duplicate analysis

Use Station 06R002 for duplicate analysis

Note the LWG plans to collect sediment samples at all stations where crayfish and/or sculpin were collected

**Lamprey Ammocoetes**

The LWG proposes to eliminate the lamprey ammocoete sampling program based on results of the LWG's reconnaissance survey and the reconnaissance survey conducted last week by fish biologists from the Umatilla, NOAA and the LWG

**Benthic Infauna**

The LWG proposes to modify the benthic infauna tissue sampling program to focus on clams only. We found during a reconnaissance survey that the tissue mass of benthic infauna was extremely low in the silty and muddy habitats that predominate in the lower Willamette River. Clams were found in some sandier habitats. We propose to collect clams from the locations proposed in the Field Sampling Plan that contain sufficient numbers of them to yield a minimum of a 300g tissue sample for chemical analysis.

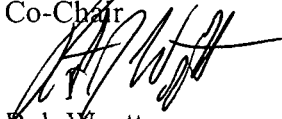
At present we believe that we will be able to complete all proposed sampling for black crappie, northern pikeminnow, and smallmouth bass, as well as crayfish and sculpin as modified above. Additionally, we will generate duplicate samples at 10 percent of the stations for those species that we have sufficient numbers of fish. We will continue to fish for these species until the end of October. At the end of October all frozen fish will be evaluated for placement into

composites We anticipate meeting with the EPA technical team to define the composites after which we will forward these recommendations to EPA for approval

Please give either of us a call if you have any further questions or concerns.



Trey Harbert  
Co-Chair



Bob Wyatt  
Co-Chair

cc      LWG Executive Committee  
         LWG Legal Committee